

MEMO

DATE: December 15, 2005

TO: Transportation and Communications Committee

FROM: Rosemary Ayala, Lead Regional Planner, 213-236-1927, ayala@scag.ca.gov

SUBJECT: 2006 Federal Transportation Improvement Program Status Update

SUMMARY:

The current 2006 Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP) is scheduled for SCAG adoption in August 2006. In order for the SCAG Regional Council to adopt the 2006 FTIP the program must meet the following 5 transportation conformity tests:

1. Timely Implementation of Transportation Control Measures (TCM's).
2. Fiscal Constraint
3. Interagency Consultation and Public Involvement
4. Regional Emissions Analysis
5. Consistency with the Regional Transportation Plan

One of the criteria associated with meeting the fiscal constraint requirement is that the program must be consistent with the 2006 State Transportation Improvement Program Fund Estimate.

The issues highlighted in the table below detail SCAG's concerns for meeting the 2006 FTIP transportation conformity tests. SCAG staff met with the county transportation commissions and the Imperial Valley Association of Governments (IVAG) on December 9, 2005 to discuss the potential impacts of the 2006 STIP upon the 2006 FTIP.

The main issues that the commissions, IVAG and SCAG staff's discussed were fiscal constraint, timely implementation of TCM's, and Regional emissions analysis. Two strategies in which to deal with the issues were discussed. First, if the California Transportation Commission (CTC) does not approve one of the commissions/IVAG's projects as proposed (STIP adoption scheduled for April 27, 2006) the commissions commit to backfilling the project with local and/or other federal funds. Second, the commissions/IVAG will provide SCAG with a worst case modeling scenario for projects where backfilling is not an option. There was a consensus to proceed with these two strategies. These strategies also allow SCAG to proceed with its analysis of the 2006 FTIP while minimizing the number of potential changes to the program in April.

The meeting was followed by the Chief Executive Officer's meeting in which the issues and a summary of the earlier meeting was presented.

All the agencies are committed to working together to produce a 2006 FTIP that meets the conformity requirements. As the commissions /IVAG continue to develop their respective programs they should keep these issues in mind. The strategies discussed reflect a regional approach in meeting federal conformity requirements—as any county's actions can impact the SCAG region as a whole.

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BACKGROUND vs ISSUES	
SCAG 2006 FTIP Adoption Schedule	Background: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> January 9, 2006 - County TIPs due to SCAG March 1 – April 28, 2006 – SCAG prepares Regional emissions analysis. June 16, 2006 - Start of the 30-day public review period. August 3, 2006 – Regional Council scheduled to adopt the FTIP. October 4, 2006 the 2004 FTIP expires.
Timely Implementation of Transportation Control Measures (TCM)	Background: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Committed TCMs must be implemented by the project completion date in order to meet the timely implementation test.
Fiscal Constraint	Background: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The first 3 years of the FTIP must be financially constrained. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has indicated that the STIP component must be consistent with the 2006 STIP Fund Estimate yearly targets. A county's STIP priorities and project delivery schedules, however, may differ from the STIP programming targets. CTC staff has indicated that a region could propose over their 2006 STIP Fund Estimate targets. Issue: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In order to meet federal financial constraint requirements, counties proposing over their respective STIP targets should have a back-up plan, in the event that one of their projects is not approved in the 2006 STIP as proposed.
Modeling Network & Schedule	Background: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The 2006 STIP adoption may impact the 2006 FTIP Regional emissions analysis. Counties should be aware that a project's completion date determines the modeling year of a project. Issue: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changes to project completion dates may impact the Regional emissions analysis. The region may need to develop a couple of modeling scenarios in order to prevent a delay in FTIP approval.
Public Transportation Account	Background: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The 2006 STIP funding availability is primarily from the Public Transportation Account (PTA). Issue: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PTA eligibility, however, may not be consistent with a county's project priorities.
Approved 2006 FTIP Lockdown	Background: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Federally approved 2006 FTIP in place October 2006. An approved 2006 FTIP may still face obstacles if state budget conditions change.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The FHWA has stated that if state funding is less than STIP assumptions lockdown of the 2006 FTIP may occur. • A lockdown means that only administrative amendments may move forward. • An MPO has to demonstrate financial constraint in order to remove the lockdown. <p>Issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prop 42 revenues and PTA funds may not materialize—impacting financial constraint determination. • Indian gaming funds may not materialize. • If just one county is unable to demonstrate financial constraint, the entire regional FTIP is subject to the lockdown.
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The following options were presented to the commissions and IVAG at the December 9, 2005 meeting which resulted in the 2 strategies discussed earlier and which the group agreed upon.

OPTIONS	PRO	CON
Don't Program Over Target	<p>A Financially constrained FTIP</p> <p>Adhere to FTIP modeling schedule</p>	May not be consistent with county's priorities and/or project delivery schedule
Require CTC's/IVAG to Backfill Over Target	<p>If a project is not approved in 2006 STIP the 2006 FTIP will still be financially constrained</p> <p>No change to model</p>	Limited local resources
Run Two Model Scenarios Prior to adopted 2006 STIP	Proactively try to adhere to the FTIP adoption schedule	<p>May not be consistent with the adopted 2006 STIP</p> <p>May result in yet another model run</p> <p>May impact ability to deliver AQMP modeling information</p>
Delay Modeling Schedule Until 2006 STIP Approved	<p>Less room for error</p> <p>Efficient use of staff resources</p>	<p>Most likely the region will not meet the August 2006 FTIP due date</p> <p>No federally approved FTIP by October 4, 2006</p>